

Public Chapter 124

SENATE BILL NO. 122

By Cohen, Carter

Substituted for: House Bill No. 870

By Kisber, Langster, McDaniel

AN ACT To designate a certain segment of Interstate 40 as the "Music Highway".

WHEREAS, Since the inception of our statehood on June 1, 1796, Tennessee has played an instrumental role in the growth, development and burgeoning popularity of various forms of American music; and

WHEREAS, The Bluff City of Memphis is undisputedly both the birthplace and cradle of the blues, having produced numerous legendary blues performers, including the great B. B. King; and

WHEREAS, Memphis is also the home of Sun Records, which launched the careers of such rock n' roll legends as Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash and Charlie Rich; and

WHEREAS, Memphis is also notable as a quality purveyor of gospel, rhythm and blues, and jazz, and is the home of the world renowned R&B label Stax Records and the inspirational soul men, the Reverend Al Green and Isaac Hayes; and

WHEREAS, The heritage of country music is both voluminous in content and proud in its accomplishments; it is indeed inspiring to trace the history of this most American form of music, from Jimmie Rogers to Garth Brooks, and find that all roads lead through Nashville; and

WHEREAS, The escalating popularity of country music throughout the world has created an immensely talented community of songwriters in Nashville that rivals New York's Tin Pan Alley of the 1940's and 1950's; and

WHEREAS, Nashville is also a Mecca for recording artists; whether they be inclined toward country, rock n' roll, blues or R&B; the fact that Elvis Presley recorded many famous sides at RCA's legendary Studio B and Bob Dylan's "Nashville Skyline" pays tribute to our city that eats, breathes and sleeps music; and

WHEREAS, Because music is such an integral part of the past, present and future of these two great Tennessee cities, it is only appropriate that this General Assembly should act to commemorate our prominence in the history, growth and development of American popular music; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, Interstate 40 from the eastern boundary of Davidson County to the Mississippi River in Shelby County is hereby designated as the "Music Highway".

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers at appropriate locations designating such segment of Interstate 40 as the "Music Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the Federal Highway Administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. The Department of Tourist Development is urged and encouraged to develop, within existing resources, an informational program to accompany such designation of I-40 as the "Music Highway". Such informational program should delineate Tennessee's important role in the history, growth and development of numerous forms of American popular music.

SECTION 6. The Department of Tourist Development is further urged and encouraged to develop radio frequency taped programs to be appropriately identified on the "Music Highway" signs. These programs should depict the history and heritage of music of the area in which the station is broadcasting and disseminate background and historical information on the area's respective music traditions, accompanied by information on music venues and historical sites in the area. The Department of Tourist Development is encouraged to seek out financial sponsors in the music and music tourist related fields in each community to participate in such program. It is recommended that such radio frequency taped programs should be available to the traveling public and be available for listening along Interstate 40 at least within the limits of Shelby County and Davidson County and a radius of at least ten (10) miles from each county's boundaries within Tennessee.

SECTION 7. The Department of Tourist Development is further urged and encouraged to consider the implementation of similar programs in Jackson and other Tennessee localities notable for their musical traditions.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.